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SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF THE CHINGALEE TRIBE, NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

By R. H. MATHEWS

In 1900 I contributed to the Anthropological Society of Washington an article entitled "The Wombya Organization of the Australian Aborigines,"¹ accompanied with a map showing the geographic limits of the territory within which it prevails. The Wombya or Wombaia type of organization is distinguished by the tribe being divided into eight sections, which intermarry one with the other in conformity with certain laws. This type is in force in the northwest corner of Queensland, the northern corner of West Australia, and over the greater part of the Northern Territory.

Since presenting the article referred to, I have made further investigations respecting the laws of intermarriage, and have thought it right to report the result of my work for the information of the ethnologists of America and Europe. The Chingalee tribe will again be taken as our example and a table used to illustrate the intermarrying divisions. The names in this table are the same as those given in the table accompanying my former article, excepting that I have omitted the termination *-injah*, which is common to nearly all of them, in order that they may occupy less space.

I have also found it convenient to alter somewhat the arrangement of the sections constituting the two phratries, A and B, each phratry comprising four sections. The table shows the husband, wife, son, and daughter belonging to each of the eight divisions, on the same line across the page.

If we take the first name in the table it will serve as an illustration of all the rest. Chimitcha's tabular or direct wife is Nungalee, which we shall call No. I. He can, in certain cases marry, Nala, which we have denominated his alternative wife, or No. II. Or he can, subject to prescribed restrictions, take a Nana as his wife, which

¹ *American Anthropologist*, N. S., II, pp. 494-501, with map.

we shall distinguish as No. III. Moreover, Chimitcha may occasionally espouse a Namitcha maiden, whom we shall set down as No. IV.

TABLE I

PHRATRY	HUSBAND	WIFE	SON	DAUGHTER
A	Chimitcha	Nungalee	Taralee	Naralee
	Chuna	Nala	Tungaree	Nungaree
	Chula	Nana	Chemara	Nemara
	Chungalee	Namitcha	Champachina	Nampatchina
	Chemara	Naralee	Chula	Nala
	Champachina	Nungaree	Chungalee	Nungalee
B	Tungaree	Nampachina	Chuna	Nana
	Taralee	Nemara	Chimitcha	Namitcha

No. I is the normal or usual wife of Chimitcha, and is the one most generally married. No. II is the next most frequently allotted wife. Nos. III and IV are not of such common occurrence, although quite in accordance with the aboriginal law.

Again, Chuna marries Nala as his tabular wife, or No. I; he takes Nungalee as his alternative spouse, or No. II; he mates with Namitcha as No. III; and he can marry a Nana woman as No. IV.

Similarly, Chula and Chungalee can marry either of the women opposite their respective names in Table I as their No. I and No. II wives. Or they can take a Nala or a Nungalee as their No. III and No. IV wives. It is evident, therefore, that any man of Phratry A can marry any one of the four women mentioned in that portion of the table, subject to the modifications stated above.

Everything that has been said respecting the people in Phratry A applies to the marriages of the men and women in Phratry B, *mutatis mutandis*.

In all cases the section name of the progeny is determined through the mother. If Chimitcha marry Nungalee, his children are Taralee and Naralee; if he take a Nala, they are Tungaree and Nungaree; if he choose a Nana, they are Chemara and Nemara; and if he be allotted a Namitcha, his children will be Champachina and Nampachina.

Space will not permit the use of genealogical tables and explanations for exhibiting how intermarriages are regulated, hence this

matter must be passed for the present. By means of trustworthy correspondents residing in the territory of the Chingalee tribe, I have been trying for some years to ascertain definitely how the totems descend — whether through the men or through the women ; but I am not yet satisfied. In describing the organization of kindred tribes in adjacent districts, Spencer and Gillen have endeavored to show that descent is through the men, but I am equally dissatisfied with their conclusions.

One of my most valued and careful correspondents has sent me the following tabulated list of sixteen members of the Chingalee tribe, in which, at my request, he has given me the English name, together with the section and totem, of each individual ; the totem of his or her father ; the totem of his or her mother, and the totem of the offspring.

TABLE II

No.	Individual (man and woman).			Totem of Individual's Father.	Totem of Individual's Mother.	Totem of Individual's Offspring.
	Name	Section	Totem			
1	Charlie	Chuna	Black striped snake	Black striped snake	Fish	Black striped snake
1a	Lucy (wife)	Nala	Native bee	Streculia	Native bee	
2	Harry	Chuna	Earthworm	Nut-grass	Earthworm	Iguana
2a	Nora	Nala	Iguana	Black striped snake	Iguana	
3	Jacob	Chuna	Sleepy-lizard	Sleepy-lizard	Wallaby	No children
3a	Daisy	Nana	Sulky-snake	Sulky snake	Dog	
4	Old Dad	Chuna	Sleepy-lizard	Sleepy-lizard	Wallaby	Sleepy-lizard
4a	His wife	Nana	Stone knife	Stone knife	Dog	
5	Toby	Tungaree	Water snake	Iguana	Ground honey	Water snake
5a	Belle	Nemara	Honey and kangaroo	Bandicoot	Tree honey	
6	Rowley	Chula	Kangaroo	Kangaroo	Bandicoot	Kangaroo
6a	His wife	Nana	Honey	Streculia	Honey	
7	Palmer	Chula	Honey	Honey	Nut-grass	Honey
7a	His wife	Nana	Kangaroo	Water snake	Kangaroo	
8	Jack	Chula	Iguana	Streculia	Iguana	Streculia
8a	Mary	Nungalee	Streculia and Wallaby	Wallaby	Streculia	

In the above table, Nos. 1, 2, 6, and 7 are married to the normal or "direct" wives, whom we previously distinguished as No. I.

No. 5 in the table has an "alternative" or No. II wife. No. 8 is married to a No. III woman, which may be called "rare." Nos. 3 and 4 are united to "exceptional" or No. IV wives.

According to Table II the children of Nos. 1, 4, 5, 6, and 7 have the same totem as the father. Nos. 2 and 8 take the totem of the mother. Again, on examination of the totems in the fourth, fifth, and sixth columns, it is seen that some of them follow the father, some the mother, and some follow neither parent. Other individuals have two totems.

In other instances not included in this table, I have discovered that even among the offspring of the same parents there is considerable irregularity — some of the children having one totem and some another. I am inclined to think, however, that if one could prepare genealogies showing two or three generations, taking into account all the ramifications caused by the marriages I have numbered I, II, III, and IV, the laws of descent might be found more regular than at present appears.

It may be stated that I am the only student up to the present who has reported the marriages herein referred to as No. III and No. IV among the Wombya or any kindred tribe; and no author has before attempted to arrange the sections composing the phratries as they now appear in Table I. The present article is necessarily very brief, but it is believed that it will result in shedding new light on the social organization of Australian tribes and enable investigators to start anew.

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